

In the Specification:

Please replace the original Brief Description of the Drawings section of the specification with the following:

Please replace the original paragraph beginning on page 3, line 23, and ending on page 4, line 14, with the following:

-- FIG. 2 shows a side view of the bat 10 having a bunt aid 20 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention attached to the barrel 16 of bat 10. As can be seen, bunt aid 20 is attached to the bat using attachment means 22, which may be a hook-and-loop strap, such as a ~~Velcro~~ VELCRO® strap. Using a ~~Velcro~~ hook-and-loop strap as attachment means 22 allows the bunt aid to be snug against the bat, but removable for use with other bats 10 or so bat 10 can be used conventionally. Referring to FIG. 6, attachment means 22 is shown having releasably coupled male end 22m and female end 22f, which could be snaps, buckles, or hooks and loops. Further, while attachment means 22 is shown as a ~~Velcro~~ hook-and-loop strap, other attachment means are usable, such as a rubber ring (such as a rubber band), a strap having snaps, etc. or even combinations, such as a rubber ring around the barrel of the bat that secures the bunt aid to the bat using ~~Velcro~~ VELCRO® end pieces. Also, attachment means 22 could be a tape or adhesive 39 (See FIG. 3) between the bat 10 and the bunt aid 20. Other attachment means 22 could include a suction cup 38 (See FIG. 7) on the back of bunt aid 20. Alternatively, bunt aid 20 could also be integral to the bat 10. For example, if bat 10 was made out of a polymer, the bat mold could have the bunt aid attached directly to the barrel of the bat. Alternatively, a metal or wooden bat could have the bunt aid integral to the bat. Still another attachment means could be a sleeve of some type. For example, as shown in FIG. 5, bunt aid 20 could be molded to a foam sleeve 50 having at least one open end 52 that fits snugly over the barrel 16 of bat 10, where the other end could be open or closed. Or the sleeve could have a slit (not shown in the drawing) on a side opposite the bunt aid so the sleeve partially wraps around barrel 16, which

slit could be anchored using ~~Velcro hooks and loops as with the straps above~~
(also not shown in the drawing) or the like. --